



## **CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board of Education regards input from the public to be not only desirable but essential to effective decision making. In order to foster this intention and to provide an opportunity for public discussion, a period not to exceed 30 minutes shall be set aside for public comment at school board meetings.

Members of the public who wish to address the board may indicate that intention in either of the two ways:

1. They may inform the clerk of the board prior to the meeting that they wish to address the board. They should include what topic they wish to discuss.
2. They may sign up on a sheet provided for that purpose at the board meeting prior to the start of the meeting.

At the beginning of the public comment period, the board president will read the names of speakers, in order, from the sign-in sheet. When your name is read, you may approach the podium. Speakers are allowed a three-minute time limit for comments. The board has the option of extending the public comment time period if necessary.

Board members will listen to each speaker's remarks, but no action will be taken until the board is properly prepared to address the issue. The board will respond to all communications by the most appropriate means.

The board will not permit in public session discussion involving individual district personnel or students. Persons wishing to discuss matters involving individual district personnel or students should present their comments and/or concerns to the superintendent during regular business hours.

All speakers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene language, libelous statements, threats of violence, statements advocating racial, religious or other forms of prejudice will not be tolerated. Speakers acting or speaking in a disruptive manner or who persist in speaking in an inappropriate manner will be directed to cease such behavior. Failure to comply with such direction may result in the speaker being removed from the meeting.

Following completion of the meeting agenda, at the conclusion of each meeting, at the discretion of the president of the board, an opportunity to speak will be provided to members of the public who have not previously spoken. Such comments shall be limited to three minutes.

The president shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting and shall rule on such matters as the time to be allowed for public discussion and the appropriateness of the subject being presented. The president shall have the right to discontinue any presentation, which violates this policy.

Ref: *Matter of Martin*, 32 EDR 381 (1992)  
*Appeal of Wittenben*, 31 EDR 375 (1992)  
*Matter of Kramer*, 72 EDR 114 (1951)  
NYS Department of State, Committee on Open Government,  
OML-AO-#2696 (Jan. 8, 1997) and OML-AO-#2717 (Feb. 27, 1997)